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Jasper National Park
MANAGEMENT PLAN SUMMARY

November, 1988

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Mount Athabasca.

Jasper has the largest extent of land managed as Wilderness in the four mountain parks, reflecting its theme "A Rocky Mountain Wilderness".

Mount Edith Cavell.

Maligne Lake.

The Jasper Park Management Plan provides an environmentally sensitive approach to management based on the direction provided in "In Trust for Tomorrow".

Foreword

This summary outlines the major decisions that will guide the management of Jasper National Park for the next 15 years and into the twenty-first century. The *Jasper National Park Management Plan* represents an environmentally sensitive approach to management based on the direction provided through *In Trust for Tomorrow: A Management Framework for Four Mountain Parks*. In producing the plan, the Canadian Parks Service faced a significant challenge— to find ways of allowing millions of visitors each year to enjoy, use and appreciate the park while conserving its pristine beauty and wilderness. The result successfully reflects the significance of the park's World Heritage Site status and its international reputation as a protected area.

Public involvement in the planning program has been extensive, as witnessed by the consultation that played an important part in addressing many contentious issues, such as the establishment of a boundary for the town of Jasper, and the future of the airfield. Although many divergent views were expressed, efforts have been made to reconcile differing perspectives within the statutory mandate outlined in the *National Parks Act*.

I want to thank the many people who contributed to the plan through their presentations, letters and participation at meetings. Such interest ensures that Jasper National Park will be managed in a way that meets the high expectations of Canadians.

Tom McMillan, P.C., M.P.
Minister of the Environment

1 INTRODUCTION

The Four Mountain Parks Planning Program, begun in late 1981, has been the most complex and high-profile program of its type in the Canadian national park system. The program was committed from the beginning to extensive public consultation. The first stage was the completion of a comprehensive ecological inventory and evaluation of natural resources in all four parks.

Public consultation has been an important component of the planning process.

The next key stage was the production of *In Trust for Tomorrow: A Management Framework for Four Mountain Parks*. This document, the result of almost four years of planning in cooperation with many interest groups, concerned citizens and other government agencies, then served as the basis for preparing detailed management plans for each of the four parks.

Nigel Pass Area

The management plan is guided by the principle that preservation takes precedence over use where conflicts occur.

This summary of the management plan for Jasper National Park outlines the way in which the park will be managed during the next 15 years. Jasper, in common with the other mountain national parks, cannot be planned as an island separated from the surrounding provincial lands. Therefore, the plan identifies a number of important initiatives for action that will benefit both the park and the adjacent provincial areas.

A key issue addressed in the plan is the tension between resource protection and visitor use. The guiding principle is clear: wherever conflicts occur between resource protection and increased use and development, protection will take precedence.

The plan also addresses significant issues, such as the management of park resources, the requirement to improve visitor facilities and services, the role of the community of Jasper within the park and the establishment of the town boundary, plus the need for regional integration and the protection of the park's vast wilderness areas.

In developing this plan, the Canadian Parks Service took into consideration the thoughts and concerns of people across the country as well as the advice of all levels of government. The public's comments were gathered through mail-outs, open houses, workshops, both public and invitation-only meetings and meetings hosted by special interest groups.

The complete park management plan is available for public review at many libraries in British Columbia and Alberta, as well as offices of the Canadian Parks Service. If you wish to review the complete plan and are uncertain of how or where to obtain a copy, call or write the Public Consultation Coordinator for the western national parks at:

520 - 220, 4th Avenue S.E.,
Calgary, Alberta,
T2P 3H8
(403-292-4401)

2 THE PARK CONCEPT

Jasper National Park, along with Yoho, Kootenay and Banff, form the 20,160 km² block of land known as the Four Mountain Parks. These parks, as well as Waterton Lakes National Park, protect and preserve a representative cross-section of the Canadian Rocky Mountains. In 1984 the Four Mountain Parks were declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in recognition of their outstanding natural beauty, their diversity of vegetation and wildlife, and the exceptional examples of glaciation, canyon formations and karst features.

Jasper National Park, the largest and most northerly of the four parks, covers an area of 10,878 km², protecting a representative portion of the eastern Rocky Mountain Cordillera. Park management practices are directed toward encouraging public understanding, enjoyment, appreciation and use of this Rocky Mountain wilderness in a manner which leaves it unimpaired for future generations.

The management plan is based on a number of principles concerning visitor use, heritage resources and park operation. These principles are summarized below:

- Resource protection will take precedence over visitor use and facility development wherever conflicts occur. Visitor use will be managed to safeguard natural and cultural resources as well as the aesthetics of the park.

- The quality of appropriate visitor experiences will be improved by upgrading park facilities and services while still recognizing the diversity of interests, ages, skills and capabilities among park visitors.

- The Canadian Parks Service will continue to provide a full range of backcountry opportunities, although it will emphasize the retention of the backcountry's characteristic large, trail-less areas. In addition, the experiences of backcountry visitors will be improved by upgrading existing facilities and by reducing conflicts between user groups (notably horse and hiker parties).

- Expansion and upgrading of facilities in previously developed areas will be favoured over the development of new facilities. Facilities will be concentrated in existing nodes rather than being dispersed throughout the park.

- The Canadian Parks Service will continue to provide a variety of core services such as campgrounds and interpretation, but it will also work closely with the private sector in the planning and development of other appropriate visitor facilities and services.

- Jasper National Park is a popular tourist destination and, accordingly, tourism initiatives which are in concert with the fundamental mandate to maintain national parks unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations will be supported. The Canadian Parks Service itself will provide park opportunities closely associated with heritage resources rather than develop resort experiences. Activities that require a minimum of man-made facilities and depend upon the park's natural resources will be particularly encouraged.

Columbia Icefields

The Canadian Parks Service will work closely with the private sector in the planning and development of visitor services.

- More active cooperative and consultative programs will be established with government agencies and the tourism service industry in order to achieve mutually acceptable and beneficial goals for the provision of visitor facilities and services in the park.

- Improved and expanded communication services will be developed to better inform visitors of the range of recreational opportunities available in Jasper. The emphasis will be on improving the coordination of communication services with Banff, Kootenay and Yoho parks, as well as with outside agencies and individuals.

- Highway 16 will be managed as a travel route with only limited park-related recreational opportunities along the way. Greater effort will be directed towards improving and developing park opportunities along other park roads.

The Surprise Valley's Zone I designation helps protect its fine examples of surface karst features, such as this rillenkarren.

- The town of Jasper and its surrounding region will remain a focus of visitor activity, due to the variety of facilities, services and attractive park features in the area. The town will play several roles: administrative and operational centre and main information-interpretive centre for the park, divisional point for the Canadian National Railway and residential community for those who must live within the park. The region surrounding the town will also continue to play an important role, meeting visitor needs in a more dispersed and less urban setting.

- The Icefields Parkway will continue to be managed so as to maintain its status as an internationally-renowned sightseeing route. Visitors travelling along the Parkway will be provided with opportunities to use, enjoy and learn about this spectacular natural landscape. Particular emphasis will be directed towards upgrading the quality and range of opportunities associated with existing roadside facilities.

- In the Columbia Icefield area, the primary visitor attraction along the Parkway, facilities will be re-organized and clustered to minimize site disturbance and to improve aesthetic quality.

- In the Pyramid Bench area, one of the park's most popular day-use areas, efforts will be focused on reducing conflicts between user groups and improving the condition of day-use trails, signage, the management of existing day-use facilities, and parking at the lake sides.

- The Canadian Parks Service will manage the Four Mountain National Parks consistently, with emphasis on those activities which directly benefit visitors, including backcountry restrictions and regulations as well as the provision of information about specific recreational opportunities.

Land Use Zoning

Land use zoning is a management technique used to establish the desired level of resource protection, use and facility development on specific park lands. There are five land use zones in the system employed by the Canadian Parks Service. The following map illustrates how this system is applied in Jasper National Park.

Zone I— Special Preservation

These areas contain or support unique, rare or endangered features and public access to them is strictly controlled. Four Zone I areas, covering less than one per cent of the park, have been designated. These areas are:

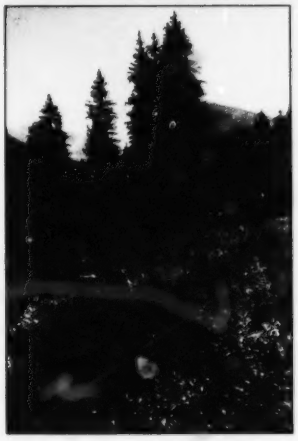
- *the Ancient Forest*, a small isolated grove containing the oldest living specimens of *Picea engelmanii* (Engelmann Spruce) identified in the Canadian Rockies.
- *the Surprise Valley*, which contains significant karst features.
- *the Devona Cave Archaeological site* (this site is not mapped due to its sensitivity to impact).
- *Jasper House National Historic Site.*

The management plan calls for further research to determine the significance and sensitivity of park resources in this zone and to develop comprehensive, ecologically-based management strategies to ensure their preservation. Additional Zone I areas may be designated as a result of these studies. However, any major changes to the zoning plan will require a formal plan amendment including public participation.

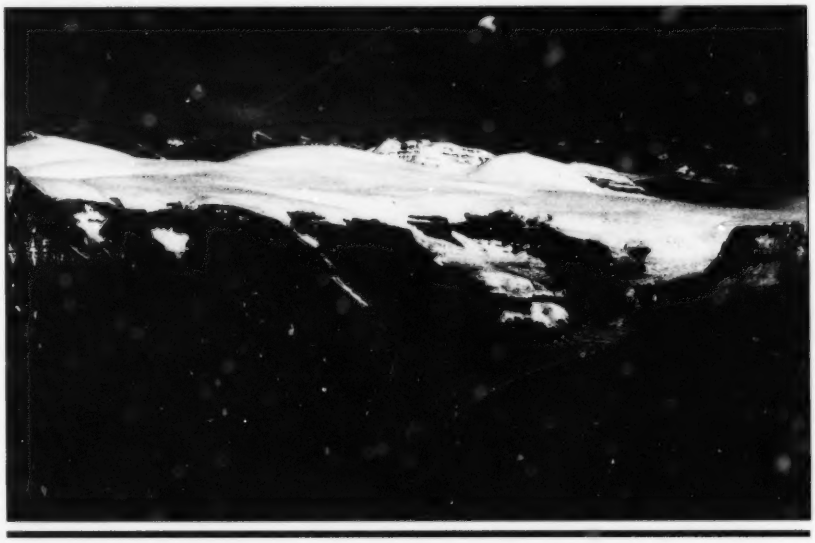
Zone II— Wilderness

Approximately 98 per cent of the park will be managed as wilderness. These are extensive areas which represent the natural history themes of the park. Much of this land consists of steep mountain slopes, glaciers and lakes. Zone II areas cannot accommodate high levels of visitor use and facility development; limits may be placed on the number of users and no motorized access is permitted. Furthermore, man-made developments will be restricted to trails, designated campgrounds and primitive shelters. Exceptions will be permitted only for basic activities and facilities associated with park administration, resource management and public safety. Areas more suitable for facility development and recreational use are designated as Zone III, IV, or V areas.

Jasper, along with Banff, will continue to provide most of the wilderness areas in the Four Mountain Parks. All existing backcountry roads in this zone will remain closed and will be allowed to revegetate naturally or will be rehabilitated to a suitable standard.



Ninety eight percent of the park will be managed as Zone II— Wilderness.



Land-Use Zoning, Jasper National Park

Zone I Special Preservation*

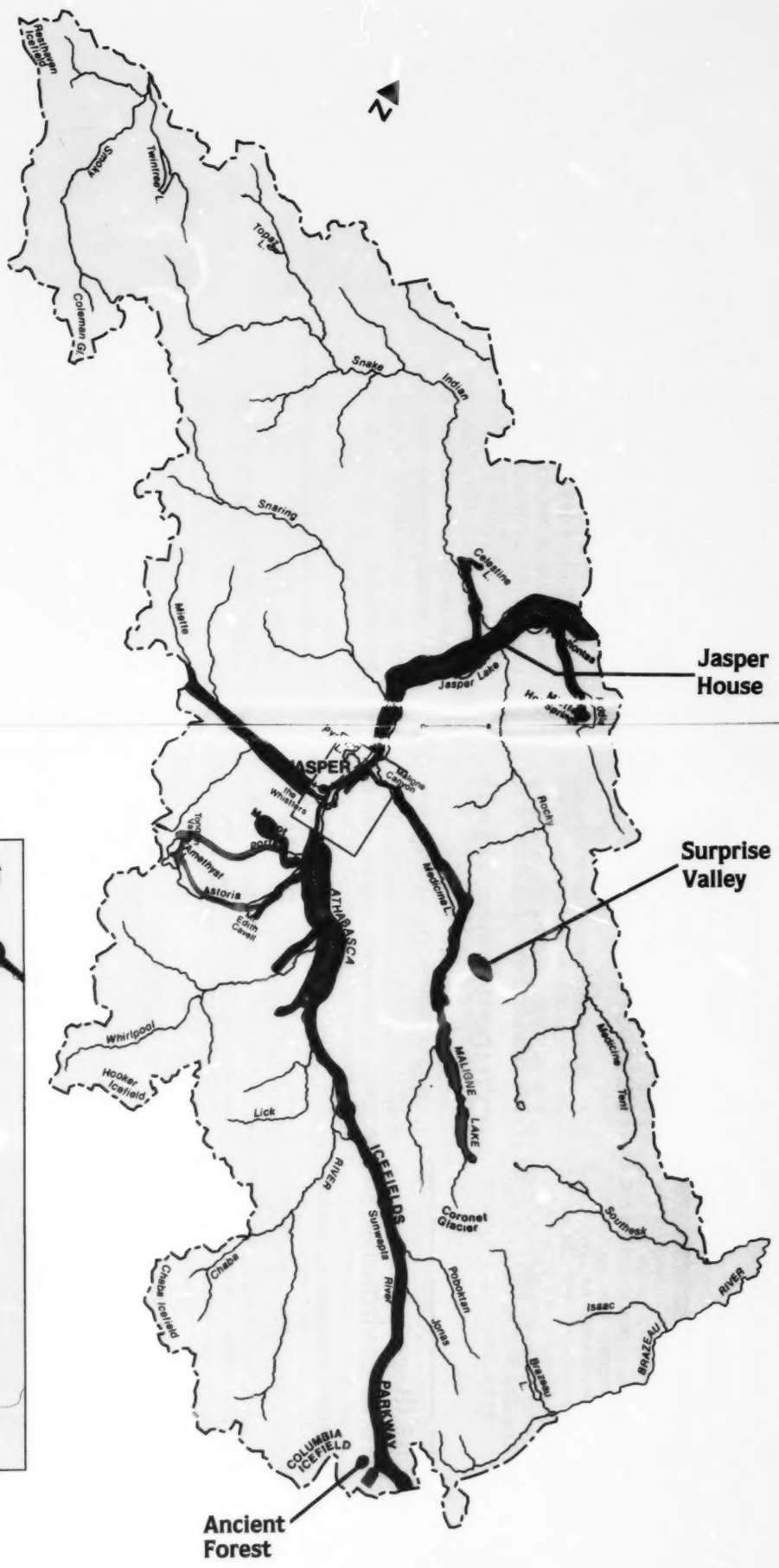
Zone II Wilderness

Zone III Natural Environment

Zone IV Outdoor Recreation

Zone V Park Services

*the Devona Cave Archaeological Site has been designated Zone I but has not been mapped due to its sensitivity



Town of Jasper and Surrounding Area

It is the intention of the Canadian Parks Service to proceed with the designation of legislated wilderness areas on the basis of the park land use zoning plan. All identified Zone II lands and appropriate Zone I lands within them will be recommended for Order-In-Council designation as wilderness areas. This will have the effect of defining these areas by regulation and preventing any level of development beyond that required for providing essential services and ensuring the protection of park resources.

Zone III— Natural Environment

Less than one per cent of the park falls into this transition zone between Zone II— Wilderness and Zone IV— Outdoor Recreation areas. Zone III lands can accommodate low density outdoor recreational activities and modest visitor facilities, such as backcountry lodges. Non-motorized access is preferred, although public transit may be permitted.

In Jasper, this zone includes the Tonquin Valley, Maligne Lake, the Pyramid bench, the area between Highway 16 and the Celestine Lake road, the Athabasca River and the portion of the Columbia Icefield serviced by commercial snow coaches.

Maligne Lake is a popular Zone III— Natural Environment area.

Zone IV— Outdoor Recreation

Outdoor recreation zones can accommodate a broad range of recreational opportunities and facilities in ways still compatible with the natural landscape. Motorized access is permitted.

The Zone IV corridor covers about one per cent of the park. It includes the rights-of-way along park roads open to public vehicles as well as recreational facilities and services where motorized public access is permitted. Zone IV developments occur at Pocahontas, Miette Hotsprings, Snaring campground and overflow, the Pyramid Bench, Athabasca Falls, Sunwapta Falls, Maligne Canyon, the Maligne Lake day-use area, Jasper Park Lodge and the Columbia Icefield. The Marmot Basin ski area is also designated as a Zone IV area.

Zone V— Park Services

The town of Jasper is the only Zone V area in the park. The *Jasper Town Plan*, once it has been approved, will guide land use within the town.

Environmentally Sensitive Sites

The Environmentally Sensitive Site (ESS) designation is applied to areas containing significant and sensitive heritage resource features that require additional special protection. Unlike Zone I areas, an ESS can accommodate relatively high levels of controlled visitor activity without jeopardizing heritage resource values. Two environmentally sensitive sites are identified in Jasper: the Edith Cavell Meadows and Pocahontas Ponds. For each designated ESS, resource and visitor management strategies will be developed that reflect the high priority placed on their protection.

3 PLAN DECISIONS

Protection and Management of Heritage Resources

The international reputation of the Four Mountain Parks—one of the largest and best known protected areas in the world—and their World Heritage status places a unique responsibility on the Canadian Parks Service as the steward of these spectacular landscapes. The plan guidelines ensure resources will be managed in ways consistent with the area's international status.

The park was not established along ecological boundaries. As a result, proper management of its natural resources requires close cooperation with federal, provincial and private managers of adjacent lands. The plan emphasizes an ecological approach to resource management.

Mountain Caribou.

Resource management programs will be coordinated among neighbouring agencies to ensure the continued protection of the park's ecosystem.

Moberly Homestead.

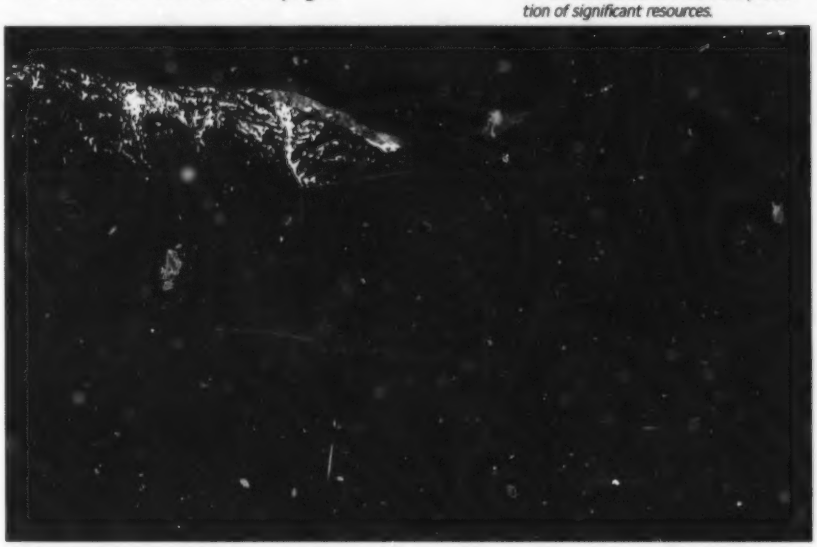
A cultural resource management program will be established to ensure the protection of significant resources.

The maintenance of the park's ecological and historical integrity is a prerequisite to its continued use. Therefore, the greatest possible protection will be given to unique, sensitive, rare or endangered plant and animal species; and also to special habitats without which certain species would not survive. The plan also ensures that cultural resources of park, provincial, and national significance will be protected and that the management policies of the Federal Heritage Buildings Review Office will be followed.

The Athabasca River has been identified as a Canadian Heritage River in recognition of its outstanding natural, human heritage and recreational values. The Canadian Parks Service will ensure that these values are protected and will encourage public awareness of the river's Canadian significance.

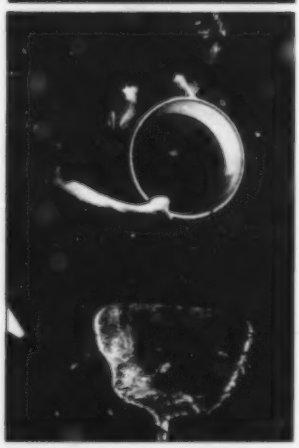
The plan gives high priority to improving the aesthetic quality of man-made facilities and related developments. Indeed, the future redevelopment of any facility will be designed to be compatible with the surrounding environment. In addition, the rehabilitation of already-disturbed park lands will be a priority. These initiatives will improve the aesthetic quality of the park, help repair existing environmental damage and serve as an exemplary case of responsible land stewardship for a World Heritage Site.

Highlights concerning the protection and management of the park's heritage resources are outlined in the next few pages.



Vegetation and Fire Management

The Canadian Parks Service follows a program of wildfire suppression in cooperation with the other national parks and the British Columbia and Alberta forest services. Fire, however, is a natural ecological process and the success of the fire suppression program has adversely altered the ecological balance. As a result, the important role of fire will now be recognized in managing the park's forests. *The Canadian Parks Service will use fire as a tool to maintain the stability and diversity of ecosystems while still protecting park facilities and neighbouring lands from wildfires.*



Further data on aquatic ecosystems are required to develop a fisheries management plan.

Wildlife Management

Actions will be taken to ensure representative wildlife populations are maintained in the park; particularly sensitive species such as grizzly bear, caribou, wolves, cougar and raptors (predatory birds). The plan emphasizes the reduction of the impact of the Yellowhead Highway and Canadian National Railway on park wildlife. Important wildlife habitats will also be protected, possibly by closing these areas to visitor use seasonally or temporarily. In addition, cooperative and coordinated management strategies will be developed with provincial agencies for the management of species that migrate across park boundaries.

Grizzly Bear.

Species sensitive to visitor use, such as mountain caribou and grizzly bear, will receive priority for protection.

Fisheries Management

Sport fishing will be managed to ensure the protection of aquatic ecosystems and the viability of native fish populations. A management plan will be developed to identify both sport fishing locations and the strategies necessary to maintain viable native fish populations. Actions may include the limited stocking of lakes accessible by roads. Efforts will also be made to provide visitors with realistic expectations of fishing opportunities in the park. The park already protects the headwaters and upper reaches of many streams flowing through provincial lands. The Canadian Parks Service will work cooperatively with provincial agencies to manage fish populations in these streams.

Cultural Resources

The mandate of national parks includes the protection and preservation of not only natural resources but also features of archaeological and historical importance. A cultural resource management program will be developed. The policies of the Federal Heritage Buildings and Review Office will be strictly followed. The Canadian Parks Service will also comply with the spirit of the *Alberta Historic Resources Act* in its management of park sites covered by this Act.

Although a detailed inventory and assessment of cultural resources has not been completed, a number of nationally significant sites have already been identified in the park. These include four National Historic Sites: Athabasca Pass, Henry House, Jasper House and Yellowhead Pass. Jasper House and the Devona Cave archaeological site have been designated as Zone I special preservation areas to ensure their protection.

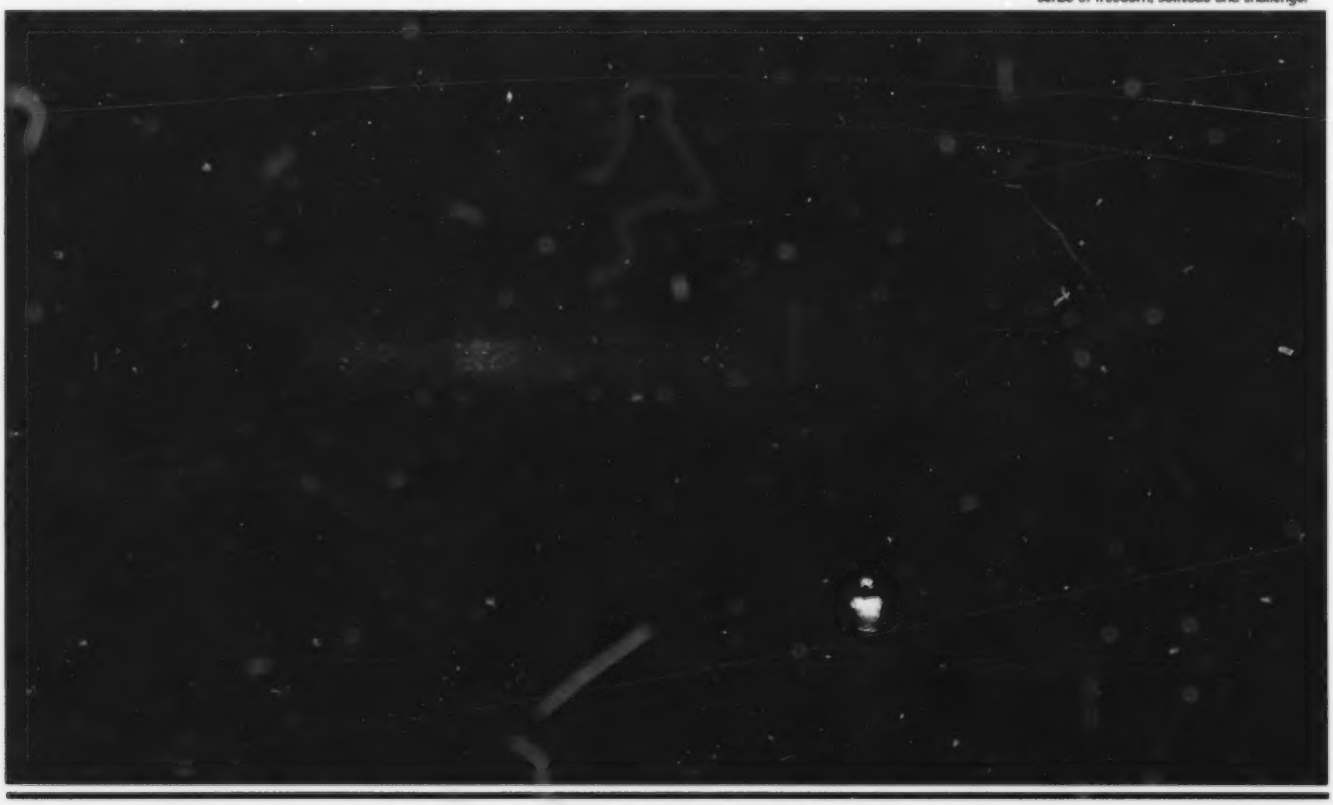
The Canadian Parks Service is also committed to protecting historic resources of park significance and will seek the help of local residents in preserving the heritage character of these structures. An inventory of buildings with potential park significance will be compiled to identify structures requiring protection.

Visitor Understanding, Appreciation and Enjoyment

The Canadian Parks Service recognizes the important role of Jasper and the other mountain national parks in the tourism industry of Alberta and British Columbia. The plan provides direction for a variety of tourism initiatives, including the development of coordinated marketing programs, the physical upgrading of visitor facilities and the provision of high quality recreational opportunities. It particularly supports activities that depend on the park's natural resources and that require a minimum of man-made facilities. Park lands have already been considerably developed to accommodate the present high level of visitor use.

The future demand for recreational opportunities is difficult to anticipate because of the unpredictable nature of several factors: developments in the region surrounding the park, fluctuations in foreign rates of exchange, changes in tourism and recreation patterns, and the manner in which tourism is marketed. Accordingly, this plan provides for a range of responses to any significant changes in demand. Better use of existing facilities will be encouraged through market-oriented planning programs. No extraordinary attempts will be made, however, to promote well-used existing facilities or new types of visitor use. But more will be done to provide recreational opportunities for disabled and elderly park visitors.

The management plan contains direction for five major types of visitor activities. The highlights of the recommendations in each of these areas are described on the following pages.



Whitehorse Pass.

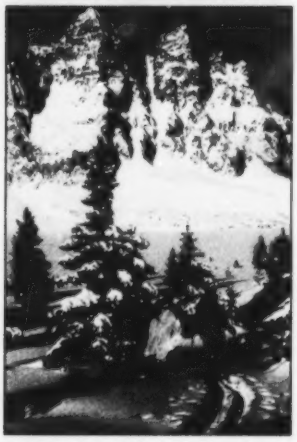
Large backcountry areas will be left free of man-made facilities, to provide visitors with the opportunity to experience a sense of freedom, solitude and challenge.

Backcountry Opportunities and Facilities

Most of the park is managed as backcountry, and offers a complete range of visitor experiences, including over 1000 km of maintained trails, more than 100 backcountry campgrounds, seven roofed accommodation facilities and a permanent horse camp. Approximately 9,000 visitors stay overnight each year. Opportunities for hiking range from the popular Tonquin Valley and Skyline trails to the primitive North and South Boundary trails and a number of large areas without trails. The Tonquin and Skyline trails receive the most use, followed by sections of the North Boundary, Jonas, Poboktan, Maligne Pass and Fryatt trails.

The existing range of backcountry opportunities will be retained but facilities will be upgraded and backcountry information improved. The Canadian Parks Service will also permit sponsoring agencies or individuals to redevelop existing lodges, shelters and huts according to specific guidelines and to develop new shelters in the Maccarib Creek, Geraldine Lakes and Jacques Lake/Merlin Pass areas. Trail linkages will be developed wherever possible to form new loop trail systems. These could include linkages between the Tonquin Valley and Mount Robson Provincial Park and between the Geraldine Lakes trail and the Fryatt Valley, plus a loop opportunity along Ptarmigan Creek and the Skyline trail. Use of the Fiddle River and Fryatt trails will be encouraged by constructing bridges over the Fiddle and Athabasca rivers. Emphasis will also be placed on maximizing the use of existing trails by improving the trail guide information available to visitors and encouraging use of the park's less used trails.

Large areas will continue to be left free of man-made facilities. For example, the Snaring River Valley/Victoria Cross Ranges, Brazeau Ranges and the Winston Churchill Ranges will be managed so that visitors will have a chance to experience a sense of freedom, solitude and challenge. Random camping will be permitted in these areas.



The Tonquin Valley is the most popular ski touring area in the park.

Athabasca Falls Viewpoint.

Roadside facilities will be upgraded to improve visitor experience.

Day-Use Facilities and Services

A broad range of day-use facilities are available in the park. These include roadside facilities provided by the Canadian Parks Service, such as view points, interpretive sites and picnic sites, and also commercial facilities, such as the Jasper Tramway, the Maligne Canyon and Maligne Lake teahouses, and the Columbia Icefield snowcoach. The major day-use facilities are located at the Columbia Icefield, Pyramid Bench, Mount Edith Cavell, the Whistlers summit, Maligne Canyon, Miette Hotsprings, and lakes Edith and Annette. The park also contains a private golf course and a downhill ski area. A separate planning program has been completed for Marmot Basin ski area; therefore, its future operation and management is not addressed in the park management plan.

Facilities at the Columbia Icefield will be re-organized and clustered to facilitate use, minimize site disturbance and improve aesthetic quality. The Pyramid Bench area will be re-developed to address traffic flow and parking problems and conflicts between user groups. In addition, lakeshore facilities, recreational opportunities, access for the disabled and day-use trails will all be improved.

Substandard roadside facilities, including some picnic sites, pull-offs and viewpoints, will be upgraded and the sites rehabilitated as needed. Appropriate facilities will also be developed to meet the demand of the increasing numbers of tour bus groups. Roadside facilities that are poorly located from an environmental or visitor use perspective will be removed or relocated to fill any gaps in service. In addition, new facilities and redeveloped roadside facilities will be integrated with other types of park developments.

Existing commercial day-use facilities will be retained and permitted to redevelop where appropriate. For example, the golf course at Jasper Park Lodge may expand within the existing leasehold; however, new land will not be released for golf courses in the park.

Substandard day-use trails will be upgraded and equipped with interpretive signs wherever appropriate. Efforts will be made to increase the use of day-hiking trails near the townsite by improving trail linkages, signage and information. Trails will also be developed to link overnight accommodation with points of interest.

Recreational Activities

A variety of recreational activities is carried out in the park. This includes driving for pleasure; cross-country skiing; canoeing, kayaking and rafting; bicycling; horse use; sport fishing; lake boating; caving; dog-sledding and scuba diving. The private sector currently contributes substantially to the range of recreational activities that visitors enjoy in the park by providing services such as guided raft tours; horse, bicycle and boat rentals; fishing guides and dog-sledding trips.

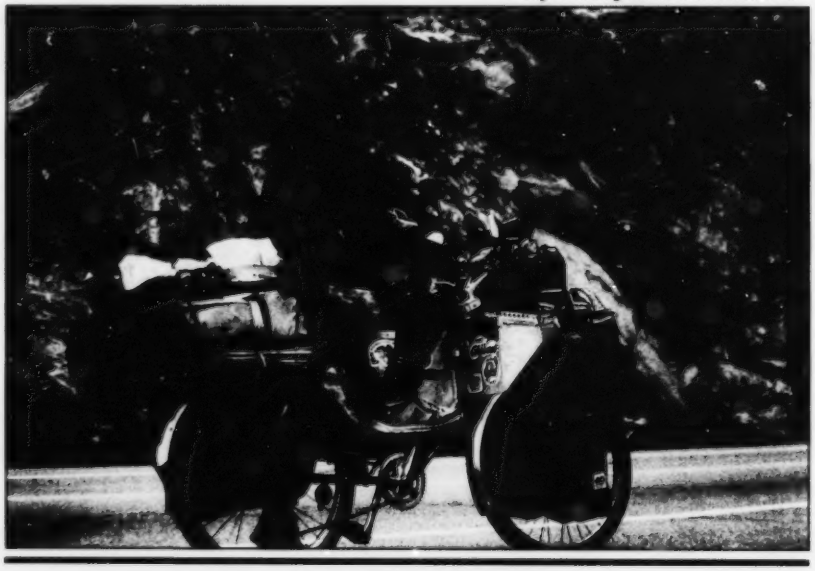
The management plan provides direction for improving the quality of outdoor recreational opportunities in the park while considering the needs of visitors of differing ages, skills, interests and physical abilities. An important part of these initiatives will be the development of improved information about available recreational opportunities. The Canadian Parks Service will cooperate with other organizations and individuals in the provision of visitor information and facilities and in the marketing of recreational opportunities.

Driving for pleasure is the most popular activity in the park. Emphasis will be placed on upgrading the visual and aesthetic quality of roadside facilities in order to improve this recreational opportunity. Efforts will also be directed toward improving cycling opportunities. Cross-country skiing is another popular park activity for which opportunities may be expanded and available information be improved.

In addition, recreational opportunities associated with the Athabasca and other park rivers will be enhanced. Access and exit sites for these rivers will be improved and an information package about the Athabasca River will be prepared to explain the natural, historic, and recreational values of this Canadian Heritage River. Power boating will not be permitted on park rivers.

The use of electric motors generated considerable public interest during the planning program. Boats with electric motors will continue to be permitted on all Zone III and IV lakes, including Maligne Lake.

The Icefields Parkway, with its wide shoulders, is one of the most popular bicycle touring routes in North America.



Horse use has been a contentious topic throughout the planning program. Public comments have generally been in support of a restrictive policy on horse use to reduce trail damage and conflicts with other visitors. A strong emphasis is placed on minimizing the environmental and visitor conflicts associated with horse use. Horse use will continue to be excluded from Wilcox Pass, Fryatt Valley, Geraldine Lakes, Merlin/Jacques Lake, Meadow Creek, Eremite Valley and all park interpretive trails. Horse use in the Tonquin Valley will continue, and along the Skyline trail will be permitted from the Signal Mountain trailhead to Big Shovel Pass. Additional opportunities will be provided for horse users in the Southesk/Rocky River areas. Conflicts will be reduced further by providing separate equestrian and hiker campgrounds. Appropriate areas for horse use will be identified based upon biophysical suitability, the potential conflict between user groups, the costs of constructing and maintaining trails and the provision of a high quality park experience for horse users.

The outstanding human heritage and recreational values which led to the nomination of the Athabasca River as a Canadian Heritage River will be preserved.

Frontcountry Accommodation

The hotels, motels and private accommodation in the town of Jasper provide the main source of visitor accommodation in the park. There are 15 road-accessible campgrounds in the park, including three group tenting areas, a walk-in campground at Celestine Lake and the Snaring overflow campground for a total of 1,752 regular campsites, 500 overflow sites and 200 group tenting sites. Four hostels and 11 bungalow camps are also available to park visitors. Winter camping facilities are located at the Wapiti campground.

The existing range of roadside accommodation facilities will be retained and their use will be encouraged through market-oriented planning and information programs. Existing facilities will be permitted to expand within certain limits, i.e. those defined by *In Trust for Tomorrow: A Management Framework for Four Mountain Parks*; the relevant guidelines for outlying commercial accommodations and hostels; and site-specific environmental constraints. A separate planning process will be undertaken to provide for redevelopment of the Jasper Park Lodge, using guidelines developed cooperatively with Jasper Park Lodge and through public consultation.

Efforts will be directed toward maximizing the use of existing campground facilities. Park campgrounds will be expanded or new campgrounds developed only after existing facilities are consistently used to capacity. Hostelling opportunities will be improved through the development of a new hostel in the townsite region to replace the Maligne Canyon and Whistlers hostels; and through the replacement of the Beauty Creek hostel with a new facility at Ranger Creek. Park-related opportunities such as interpretive displays and trails will be developed in association with frontcountry facilities.

Access

A national transportation corridor, consisting of the Yellowhead Highway (Highway 16) and the Canadian National Railway, runs through Jasper along the Athabasca and Miette River valleys. In addition, there are a number of park roads providing public access to park features and a few remaining backcountry roads closed to public vehicular use.

The Jasper airfield is located along Highway 16 approximately 15 km east of the Jasper townsite. The airstrip will be retained only if there is a demonstrated need for emergency landing/diversionary purposes. Its use will be monitored over the next three years and then a decision will be made as to whether or not it will be retained for these purposes. Minimal facilities will be provided and no winter maintenance of the runway surface will occur during this interim period.

The plan contains initiatives that will improve the quality of driving experiences by rehabilitating disturbed areas along park roads and by maintaining currently accessible roads to a suitable standard. Roadside sites providing park information and interpretation will also be improved. In addition, the use of public transportation as a means of travel within the park will be encouraged.

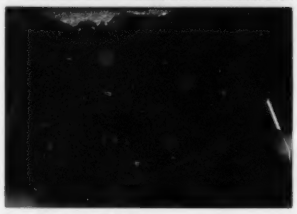
The Town of Jasper

The town of Jasper serves as a Canadian National Railway divisional point and tourist centre. It also serves as the administrative, operational and interpretive centre for Jasper National Park and as a residential community for those with a need to reside in the park.

The present population of Jasper is approximately 3500 permanent residents with an additional 1500 seasonal or short-term residents. The 1200 hotel/motel units in the town can accommodate about 3600 overnight visitors.

The Canadian Parks Service is responsible for the management of the town and will continue in this role while relying on local input and advice through the Jasper Townsite Committee. The community's physical and social concerns are being addressed through the town planning program, dealing with internal town issues such as land use policy. The town plan itself will be consistent with the objectives and guidelines in the park management plan.

The town of Jasper will be contained within the limits prescribed on the following map. The town boundary is based upon the results of an environmental assessment/public review and establishes the limits to townsite expansion. The town's low to medium scale and compact form will be maintained to preserve Jasper's small town character and to blend with the national park setting. The town will also retain its strong commercial retail core. *Land-use policy, architectural guidelines, zoning and building regulations will all continue to control appropriate development within the town and encourage excellence of design.* Pertinent community-related legislation will be reviewed and modified to control development.



Beauty Creek Exhibit.

Providing sightseeing opportunities along the internationally famous Icefields Parkway is an important component of the plan.

The town of Jasper will continue to blend with the natural character of its surroundings.

ATHABASCA
RIVER
Jasper Town Boundary

Communication Services

The Canadian Parks Service and the public recognize that communication services are crucial to the successful management of Jasper National Park. The plan contains guidelines for the four categories of Communications Services.

First, visitors and potential visitors must be aware of the kinds of facilities, services and recreational opportunities that are available in the park as well as in the surrounding region. Initiatives will be taken to inform the general public and potential visitors of the role of the national parks system and Jasper's significance within it. Many other government agencies and tourism organizations market and promote the park. Therefore, the Canadian Parks Service will ensure that accurate and up-to-date information is available to other national parks and outside agencies in the region.

Second, visitors need more detailed information about the park once they arrive. This information is currently provided at the information centres, the administration office and the warden office and also by trailhead and highway signs, brochures, Canadian Parks Service staff and local commercial operators. Steps will also be taken to improve information on outdoor recreational opportunities and accommodation facilities.

Third, the Canadian Parks Service will make visitors aware of the special resources that the parks protect and preserve, the techniques used to manage and protect these resources, and environmentally appropriate ways to visit and use the park. This type of information is provided through the park's interpretive service. A variety of popular interpretive programs is available already at sites along the Icefields Parkway and at attractions such as the Columbia Icefield Centre. Evening campground talks and nature walks are also offered. These interpretive services will be improved, expanded at popular sites and better integrated with those available in the other mountain national parks.

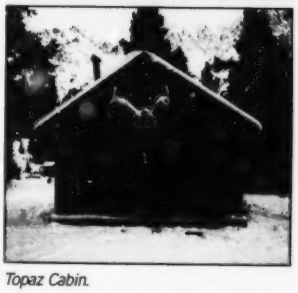
Fourth, opportunities will be expanded for the public to become involved through volunteer programs, cooperative agreements and the establishment of a cooperating association. Public involvement through planning programs will also continue.

Support Facilities

A variety of facilities have been established to support the maintenance of the park and to provide needed services to park visitors. The majority of administrative support facilities are dispersed throughout the townsite area.

A variety of changes will be made in the operation of these facilities. The park's administration, operations and maintenance functions will be consolidated in the town of Jasper in order to increase efficiency. The current warden operations centre will be closed at that time. The aesthetic and living conditions at the Tangle Creek compound and the East Gate will also be improved. Because it is no longer feasible for the Canadian Parks Service to operate the Palisades Training Centre, a private institution will be encouraged to assume its operation. The town's sanitary landfill is highly visible from the highway and continues to attract bears despite the installation of an electric fence; the Canadian Parks Service will proceed with the development of a garbage disposal system which will eliminate the need for both the landfill and the trade waste pit.

All facilities and structures in Jasper National Park contribute to the total impact of human presence on the environment. Guidelines have been developed to minimize their visual impact and to ensure that natural features, not man-made structures, are dominant.



Topaz Cabin.

Facilities such as this backcountry patrol cabin enable the Warden Service to carry out routine operational duties and respond to emergency situations.

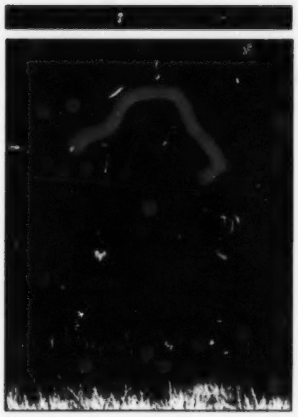
Athabasca Glacier Interpretive Walk.

Interpretive opportunities will be expanded to help visitors fully appreciate and understand the park's heritage values.

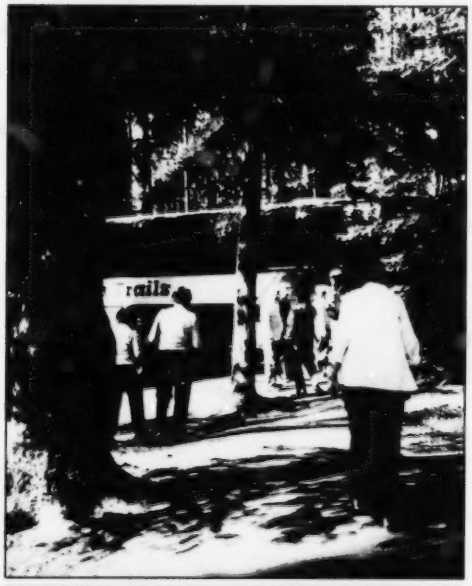
Regional Integration

Jasper National Park cannot be planned, managed and operated in isolation from the region surrounding it. The plan contains initiatives designed to result in positive economic, social and environmental impacts on both adjacent Crown Lands and local community organizations and individuals in the region. There are many factors which make cooperation essential among all of these groups; two are particularly significant. First, Jasper National Park plays a significant role in the tourism industry of western Canada. Second, the Yellowhead Highway and the mainline of the Canadian National Railway transect the park and are nationally significant transportation corridors.

Many of the park activities requiring integration have been identified already. These include resource management, the provision of outdoor recreational opportunities and the integration of information services and marketing programs for the park and adjacent areas.



Mule deer and fawn.



The Canadian Parks Service will continue to cooperate with other levels of government and the tourism service industry to pursue a range of mutually acceptable goals.

The region surrounding Jasper National Park is sparsely populated and consists primarily of provincial Crown Lands. The main population centres are the towns of Hinton and Valemount and the park serves as an important employer and purchaser of their goods and services. The west side of the park is bounded by Mount Robson and Hamber provincial parks and by lands primarily managed by the British Columbia Forest Service. Alberta's Willmore Wilderness lies adjacent to Jasper's northern boundary; the majority of the lands to the east are managed by the Alberta Forest Service.

The Canadian Parks Service will continue to work cooperatively with other organizations, individuals, levels of government, and residents of the surrounding communities to pursue a wide range of mutually acceptable goals. Consideration will be given to the region's existing and potential outdoor recreational opportunities and community requirements whenever the provision of improved or new park recreational opportunities is under review. The development of an integrated system of orientation/information services and marketing programs for the park and adjacent areas will be encouraged.

In addition, the Canadian Parks Service will investigate establishing complementary programs with Alberta and British Columbia agencies responsible for the provision of backcountry opportunities. Greater coordination in the provision of backcountry information will be emphasized.

The Canadian Parks Service will work towards a better understanding of the needs of park visitors and will share this and other information with local and regional businesses and organizations to assist them in their own planning. Due to the important role of Jasper National Park as a major tourist attraction, the Canadian Parks Service will work with local, regional, and provincial organizations in developing approaches to further enhance this function.

4 ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC REVIEW AND ASSESSMENT

The Canadian Parks Service, as a federal agency, complies fully with the Federal Environmental Assessment and Review Process. It has an additional responsibility as a conservation agency to ensure that the environmental effects of its actions are assessed, minimized and, where possible, avoided.

The Environmental Assessment and Review Process has been applied at various stages throughout the management planning program. The *Planning Options* (1983) were analyzed to determine their environmental effects, the *Jasper Core Concept* (1986) was reviewed to assess environmental impacts and an environmental assessment of this park management plan has been prepared. The results are reported in the full version of the plan.

In addition, the Canadian Parks Service is also concerned with the potential socio-economic impact of management plan initiatives. Therefore, a socio-economic impact assessment has been conducted as part of the planning program and the results are also contained in the plan.

The assessments were designed to ensure that environmental and social implications were considered during the development of plan guidelines. The assessment procedure emphasizes the identification and reduction (or mitigation) of any adverse effects associated with plan initiatives on resources or on significant ecological or social issues. This procedure results in the identification of knowledge gaps, potential impacts, mitigating measures and monitoring and research requirements. In addition, the results provide the basis for more detailed assessments at the project implementation stage.

Western Anemone.

Archaeological research.

A rigorous assessment and review process ensures that park environmental and social values are not compromised by plan proposals.

5 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

Priorities for implementing the various initiatives in the management plan have been identified. The implementation of these initiatives will be dependent upon the future availability of financial resources, demonstrated visitor demand and the findings of detailed environmental assessments.

Additional restrictions are attached to the redevelopment and expansion of existing facilities not operated by the Canadian Parks Service. The limits for redevelopment and expansion for such facilities are specified not only by the guidelines associated with the plan but also by the terms and conditions listed in current agreements with lessees, licensees or concessionaires.

The direction contained in this plan is consistent with the provisions of the *National Parks Act*, *Parks Policy* and *In Trust for Tomorrow: A Management Framework for Four Mountain Parks*. Although the plan has a 15-year time frame, it is scheduled for review every five years or earlier. In this way, adjustments can be made should conditions change substantially or if significant new information becomes available.

Lichen Nature Study.

Through careful management, today's park resources will be enjoyed by future generations.

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